

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

May 1983

The National Intelligence Council and the Estimative Process

In the US Intelligence Community's division of labor, the National Intelligence Council is the unit charged with overall responsibility for managing the production of interagency estimates, but each component of the Community contributes to and plays an active part in the process.

The following paragraphs describe how estimates are produced now, with particular emphasis on the changes that have been introduced in the process in recent months.

Production of an estimate begins with obtaining the DCI's approval for its preparation. (An estimate may start from the request of a senior policy officer or the DCI himself, from a standing requirement for periodic assessments, or from an internal NIC proposal. In practice, relatively few estimates stem from NIC proposals; 16 of the 59 formal estimates produced in Calendar Year 1982 were NIC-initiated). A new estimative project is assigned to one or more of the 14 National Intelligence Officers (NIOs)* to manage. As Chairman of the paper, the NIO finds a suitable drafter, engages the rest of the Community in the production effort, sets the timetable, and presides over the paper's completion, review, and coordination. The first significant step in this process is to develop Terms of Reference (TORs) and a Concept Paper

* ~~see attached list of specific NIOS~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

for the project, seeking assistance for this purpose from a variety of sources, including, where appropriate, the requestor himself. In 1982, in order to engage the senior leaders of the Intelligence Community more fully in this crucial step of defining the scope and direction of each estimate, we began sending draft TORs and Concept Papers directly to the principal members of the National Foreign Intelligence Board (NFIB). Heretofore, TORs had been drafted, reviewed, and coordinated at the working level, and the personal involvement of the Community's senior officers early enough to have an impact on the shape of an estimate was a rare occurrence. We believe that starting the review of an estimative outline at senior levels and progressing from there to coordination at the working level is a better, potentially more fruitful way to begin, and we now do this routinely.

Once the bare bones of the project are agreed upon, the drafting stage ensues. In choosing a drafter, the NIO has the entire Intelligence Community to draw on, and he normally seeks the best analyst for the job at hand that he can find, regardless of agency. Some of the larger papers, particularly the complex military ones, are written by interagency groups, and others are produced on the basis of contributions from more than one agency, but most are written by a single drafter, working under the guidance of the NIO. In 1982, 34 of 59 estimates were written by CIA Directorate of Intelligence drafters, 14 by NIC analysts, five by DIA, four by INR and two by more than one agency.

When a first draft of an estimative text is achieved that is acceptable to the paper's Chairman and to Chairman, NIC, formal and informal comments and advice on it are solicited from a variety of sources, including the DCI's

Senior Review Panel (a small, independent staff of distinguished senior officers with long experience in government), other NIOs, expert analysts inside the Intelligence Community, outside consultants, and, time permitting, appropriate US experts in the field. Once their suggestions have been factored in, a revised draft is prepared and sent to the DCI for his review before the coordination process begins.

Coordination usually involves meetings of the representatives of all agencies of the Intelligence Community, although on occasion, agencies with no expertise on a particular subject will opt out of the discussions. The real purpose of the coordination process is to enrich the paper by examining the facts from several different organizational and judgmental perspectives. Although there is an inevitable and inherent tendency in any coordination process to water down or negotiate away differing points of view, we try very hard not to bury or smooth over genuine points of disagreement in interpretation of the evidence or key conclusions. What we strive for is a process in which minor or inconsequential differences are talked out and resolved and major ones are illuminated and more sharply defined. We succeed in this only imperfectly and are very much aware of the need to work constantly to avoid producing "least-common-denominator" estimates.

The draft text, once the coordination sessions at the working level are completed, is then resubmitted to the DCI for his approval to schedule it for consideration at a meeting of the National Foreign Intelligence Board (NFIB). The DCI issues estimates with the advice of the Board. Each NFIB Principal has the right to dissent from any of the findings of the paper.

CONFIDENTIAL

Again, we have been trying in recent months to invigorate the process by urging the Principals to become more deeply involved in the development of each estimate from the very beginning. In the past, the Board rarely got involved with an estimate until the very last, when it generally ratified a paper whose language (including dissents) had already been worked out at a lower level. Even with greater involvement in the estimates by Board members these days, their routine concurrence in the final draft is by no means assured, even when their representatives have already signed off on it. Board action remanding a paper for more work, or a Board member's tabling a dissent or a significant change now takes place at the NFIB meeting more often than it did formerly. We regard this as healthy and we think it is likely to enhance the final product and make it possible to give the policy reader a truer picture of the Community's views on important issues.

Any process involving as many actors and as many steps as those outlined here must be seen as fairly ponderous in terms of the time consumed from start to finish. To combat that problem, we have introduced, and continue to refine, so-called "fast-track" procedures aimed at shortening the interval between a paper's inception and its completion. We use these fast-track procedures -- which essentially rely on heavy use of the secure telephone system and doing as many steps as possible simultaneously instead of sequentially -- only for papers where there is a real need to receive the Intelligence Community's views fairly quickly. Whereas we did only a handful of fast-track papers in 1980 and 1981, we did 14 last year. Our "record" so far is three working days from start to finish. Producing papers this quickly

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

requires a degree of teamwork and puts a strain on the machinery that we cannot invoke too often, but it permits us to weigh in with our combined best judgments on a fast-moving situation quickly and effectively.

Most SNIEs are now produced in periods of up to a month or two, but National Intelligence Estimates (NIEs) and Interagency Intelligence Memoranda (IIMs), our more deliberately-produced estimates, usually require several months to complete -- or more, in the case of lengthy and complex military assessments.

Thanks at least in part to our fast-track production procedures, our capability to respond to requests for assessments in support of specific decision points in the policymaking process has been steadily growing. The vehicle we most often use in instances of this kind is the Special National Intelligence Estimate. Last year, 31 of our total of 59 formal estimates were SNIEs, as opposed to 18 in 1981 and 7 in 1980. While not all SNIEs are targeted for specific policymaking needs, many are.

CONFIDENTIAL

ATTACHMENT

1. NIEs, SNIEs and IIMs are all members of the category of estimates. One estimates when one does not know; and all estimates are analytical constructs arrived at on the basis of usually inadequate information and of assumptions that govern the interpretation of this information. Since estimates are essentially inferential, and usually speculative regarding the future, and since no one inference or speculation is necessarily compelling, it is sometimes neither possible nor desirable to produce a unanimously agreed estimate. While effort should be made toward consensus, a set of alternative estimates should be presented and argued whenever irreducible uncertainties preclude agreement. Since estimates are highly sensitive to analytical assumptions about the real world with the help of which information is interpreted, it is vital that key assumptions be spelled out and, if necessary, defended in the presence of conflicting information. It is especially important that this be done in the event of estimative disagreement.

2. Given these common properties, the three art forms may be defined as follows:

a. An NIE is an estimate of a foreign situation that impinges importantly on US interests and is relevant to the formulation of important choices for foreign and national security policy, and which, in these terms, conjectures about future developments of this situation. It is normally incumbent on an estimate to illuminate how US interests are affected by the situation and how, in turn, this situation and its development may be affected by US policy. If estimative uncertainty cannot be resolved, it is also incumbent that the paper set forth alternative estimative conclusions. NIEs are in principle products of the entire Intelligence Community and are issued by the DCI with the advice of NFIB.

DERIVATIVE CLEY SIGNERS
☐ DECLASSIFIED ON 2 Oct 1985
 DERIVED FROM _____

25X1

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

b. A SNIE differs from an NIE in that it is relevant to a specific and urgent policy problem, and that it is therefore shorter, prepared more quickly and coordinated with the Intelligence Community with dispatch. It is issued by the DCI with the advice of NFIB.

c. An IIM differs from an NIE in that, although requiring the endorsement of the Intelligence Community, it is issued without NFIB concurrence, deals with policy issues of lesser significance, and may be either an assessment of some current situation or an intelligence estimate.

APPROVED BY
CINIC OR
PRESENTED AT
NFIB

As indicated, the choice and application of all three art forms cannot in some important respects be determined by precise rules. This holds true especially of the choice between IIMs and NIEs (and SNIEs), and on the extent to which an estimate will engage questions of US policy. But while these choices can be settled only ad hoc, they are too important to be made casually or without review. Ultimately these are, of course, management decisions.

d. IIA -- SHORT ESTIMATES PRODUCED QUICKLY WHEN A MORE FORMAL PAPER IS INAPPROPRIATE DUE TO SENSITIVE SOURCES, LIMITED DISSEMINATION, LIMITED NFIB PARTICIPATION
APPROVED BY CINIC -- MAY BE REVIEWED BY THE DCI

e. NIC/M -- INFORMAL NIC MEMORANDA WITH LIMITED OR NO EXTERNAL PARTICIPATION, APPROVED BY CINIC

Page Denied

Next 6 Page(s) In Document Denied

CONFIDENTIAL

May 1983

National Intelligence Officers

<u>Title</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
NIO/Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa, Indian Ocean Islands
NIO At Large (3)*	-----
NIO/East Asia**	PRC, Japan, Koreas, SE Asia, Pacific
NIO/Economics	International economic issues
NIO/General Purpose Forces	Foreign conventional (non-nuclear) mil forces
NIO/Latin America	Central and South America and Caribbean
NIO/Narcotics**	Intelligence re international narcotics trade
NIO/Near East-South Asia	(self-explanatory)
NIO/Science and Technology	(self-explanatory)
NIO/Strategic Programs	Foreign strategic (nuclear) mil forces
NIO/USSR-East Europe	(self-explanatory)
NIO/Warning	Strategic intelligence indications & warning
NIO/Western Europe	Western Europe, Canada

* 3 individuals serving as "roving NIOs" available for special assignments from DCI or Chairman, NIC and assisting other NIOs as needed. One specializes in nuclear proliferation intelligence, another serves concurrently as Director of the NIC Analytic Group (estimate drafters).

** One individual concurrently fills both positions

CONFIDENTIAL

DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE DIRECTIVE

NATIONAL FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE BOARD

(Effective 28 January 1982)

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 102, the National Security Act of 1947, and Executive Order 12333, there is established a National Foreign Intelligence Board (NFIB).

1. Mission

The NFIB will serve as the senior Intelligence Community advisory instrumentality to the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) on the substantive aspects of national intelligence.

2. Functions

The NFIB will advise the DCI on:

- a. Production, review, and coordination of national foreign intelligence.
- b. Interagency exchanges of foreign intelligence information.
- c. Arrangements with foreign governments on intelligence matters.
- d. Protection of intelligence sources and methods
- e. Activities of common concern.
- f. Such other matters as may be referred to it by the DCI.

3. Composition and Organization

The NFIB will be chaired by the DCI or the DDCI, or in their absence, by their designated representative.

The NFIB will be composed of senior representatives of Intelligence Community organizations involved mainly in the collection, processing, and analysis of intelligence.

The membership is as follows:

Director of Central Intelligence, Chairman
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, Vice-Chairman
Executive Director, Central Intelligence Agency
Director, National Security Agency
Director, Defense Intelligence Agency
Director, Intelligence and Research, Department of State
Assistant Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation (Intelligence Division)
Assistant Secretary for International Affairs, Department of Energy
Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury (National Security)
Senior representatives of the military intelligence services will attend as observers.
Senior representatives of the Department of Defense special reconnaissance programs will attend as members when programs under their purview are considered by NFIB; they may attend other NFIB sessions as observers.

The NFIB will be supported by an Executive Secretariat.

William J. Casey
Director of Central Intelligence

THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

6 May 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director for Intelligence

VIA : Chairman, National Intelligence Council

FROM : Vice Chairman, National Intelligence Council

SUBJECT : Focus of the National Intelligence Council

1. The basic intellectual thrust of the National Intelligence Council should be that of identifying future trends, examining potential future scenarios, and acting as the intelligence counterpart of the traditionally moribund policy planning apparatus. The result of this interaction should be to stimulate strategic thinking government-wide. This focus is not to supplant the Council's policy functions, intelligence community management, private sector contact roles, or estimates production.

2. Intensification or initiation of the following activities would enhance this forward-leaning focus.

A. Initiate an ongoing institutional dialogue between the Council and policy planning elements in State (SP under Steve Bosworth); NSC (Norm Bailey); and Defense (Ikle, Marshall, also peripherally Perle and Armitage). We have started this process.

B. Initiate seminars with the above offices, designed to stimulate strategic thinking on key policy issues. We have commenced such a series on Soviet perceptions with DoD's Net Assessments Office, and have scheduled an initial seminar on various contingency situations with State's Policy Planning Office. Other intelligence community involvement will be selectively desirable.

C. Within this policy planning community, distribute responsible, avowedly speculative, informal pieces on potential consequences of

CL BY Signer
DECL OADR
DISTRIBUTED FROM Multiple

SECRET

SECRET

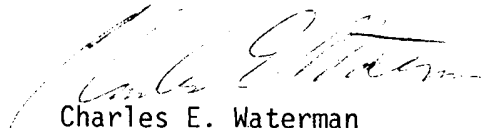
contingency future situations. This process has started. NIOs are in an ideal position to engage in such thinking.

D. Schedule a series of "vulnerability estimates" on key countries hostile to US interests. At the DCI's instigation, we are now developing such a product on Cuba, with a focus on economic, political, and paramilitary vulnerabilities. This pattern could usefully be applied, besides Cuba, to Libya, South Yemen, Iran, Ethiopia, and selectively in Eastern Europe. It would provide an in-depth backdrop to whatever actions may be deemed desirable in the future against these countries. Too often, a "quick-fix" approach is now applied, without requisite background study, when a crisis situation arises. Particularly if the quick-fix is political action, in-depth analysis should be available as a result of dispassionate prior deliberations. Intelligence Community components, in addition to CIA, should be engaged in these efforts.

E. Various non-traditional academic methodologies of forecasting instability or key evolving situations have been considered and sporadically tested in ORD/DDS&T; DDI/CPAS; and the DDI instability center. Most concerned elements agree the most promising of these is the expected utility theory of [redacted] who is under contract to ORD. The NIC should undertake to initiate use of this and possibly other promising systems in its estimative process -- both for immediate value of challenging assumptions of analysts and also to establish a valid track record for them. If proven useful, selected methodologies may later be adopted for CIA internal analytical purposes.

STAT

F. In order to guide future collection efforts -- in tasking, recruiting, and elicitation -- an integral portion of each National Intelligence Estimate should be to formulate statements of informational needs and gaps for transmittal to embassies, stations, attaches, and technical collectors. Nowhere is more interest shown by field elements in analytical productions than when they are asked to comment on estimates. This natural proclivity should be exploited as a mechanism, supplementing more formal but somewhat ponderous systems currently in use.



Charles E. Waterman

Page Denied

Next 4 Page(s) In Document Denied

CONFIDENTIAL

31 January 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR: NIOs, Assistant NIOs, AG Members

FROM : EO/NIC

SUBJECT : NIC Publication Worksheets

1. Attached are copies of a new worksheet to be completed for each NIE, SNIE, IIM, NIC Memo, and Interagency Assessment we do. The worksheet, which replaces an earlier version most of you are familiar with, should be filled out and given to me as early in the process of producing one of these papers as possible.

2. The worksheet will serve a variety of purposes. It will (a) help the DDI Foreign Liaison Staff get a jump on the process of preparing the text (or Key Judgments) of an estimate for transmittal to US missions, stations, and DDI Reps abroad, and (where permitted) foreign liaison; (b) provide the NIC Support Branch [redacted] and company) with timely information on our dissemination plans and intentions [redacted]; (c) let the NIC dissemination clerk in CPAS Registry get a head start on producing the computerized dissem list for the final publication; and (d) alert all of the above at an early date that we will (or will not) have an ORCON clearance problem. (When at all possible, please keep in mind that it is preferable to ask your drafters to "write around" the ORCON source material so as not to have to use the ORCON slug at all--or at least minimize its use.)

3. Please complete the entire worksheet for each paper you produce (except that I will fill in the subject and area codes lines, which are used in producing the computer-derived dissem lists). I need to get the completed worksheet from you at the earliest point in the production process that you can answer all the questions at the bottom of the form. For regular-track papers, this generally will be about two or three weeks prior to final approval. For fast-track papers, it may be at the onset of (or half-way through) the drafting process. I will provide copies of the completed form to NIC Support Branch, FLS, and the NIC dissemination clerk.

4. Your cooperation will be much appreciated. Please start using the attached forms immediately as each new product comes along.

Attachment: a/s

Distribution:

1 : VC/NIC

1 : Each NIO Staff

✓ 3 : DD/NIC/AG

1 : C/FLS/DDI

1 : NIC Support Branch, OCPAS

1 :

CPAS Registry

25X1

Page Denied

CONFIDENTIAL

17 February 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR: Each NIO Staff

FROM : EO/NIC

SUBJECT : NIC Project Monitoring System

1. At Herb Meyer's request, we are instituting a system within the NIC that will tell him or Harry Rowen at a glance (a) the current status at any given time of each NIE, SNIE, and IIM under way; and (b) the prospective timetable, at any given moment, for completing each such paper. The data will be put onto an NBI disc for easy updating and for playing it back in a variety of ways (e.g., by date, by type of publication, by production stage, etc.). Once the initial data load is inscribed, adding data for new papers as they get under way and changing target dates when necessary can be done relatively quickly and painlessly. (Papers will disappear from the disc once approved for publication.)

2. I will be responsible for keeping the data current, and in order to do so I will need your help. Basically, I need to hear from each of you anytime you formally begin a new NIE, SNIE, or IIM (and will need your prospective timetable for each of the ten production steps listed on the attached forms) or whenever the timing of a still-uncompleted step in producing a paper already under way changes for some reason. (On the latter, a phone call or a quick handwritten note will do very nicely.)

3. The initial job will be to collect and enter the data on all NIEs, SNIEs, and IIMs now under way. Attached are data sheets partially filled out on all (I hope) such papers now under way in your area of responsibility. For each sheet, please:

- Make any necessary corrections in my entries (my records are not nearly as complete as yours should be). A question mark following a date is my way of showing that it is prospective, not yet accomplished.
- Fill in the dates for all ten steps in the process as best you can. The more specific the dates, the better; these data sheets are for NIC internal use only, so in giving timetables for each future step in the process, go out on a limb and give me not just a specific month or week, but a day of the month if possible. These dates can, of course be changed as often as necessary.)
- Return the completed sheet to me within the next day or two.

4. I've also attached a few blank sheets. When you formally start up a new estimate, please fill one out and give it to me. Many thanks.

cc: VC/NIC
NIC/AG

CONFIDENTIAL

25X1

NIC PROJECT MONITORING SYSTEM

TYPE/TRACK: _____

TITLE : _____

*PUB NO. : _____

CHAIRMAN : _____

DRAFTER : _____

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------------|---|-------|
| (1) TOR/CP draft completed | : | _____ |
| (2) TOR/CP to SRP for comment | : | _____ |
| (3) TOR/CP to DCI (C/NIC for IIMs) | : | _____ |
| (4) TOR/CP coordinated by NFIB Reps | : | _____ |
| (5) Text first draft to NIO | : | _____ |
| (6) Text draft to SRP for comment | : | _____ |
| (7) Text draft (pre-coord) to DCI or C/NIC | : | _____ |
| (8) Text draft coordinated by NFIB Reps | : | _____ |
| *(9) DCI-approved draft to NFIB Members | : | _____ |
| (10) Final NFIB approval (IIMs by C/NIC) | : | _____ |

* Leave blank for IIMs

SECRET

CONFIDENTIAL

2 June 81
*Casby*NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS

The relating of intelligence efforts and activities to policy needs and processes and the completion of national estimates and clearing them through the Intelligence Community has been unacceptably confused, ineffective and slow. I am not being adequately staffed to meet the number and variety of requirements which are placed upon me for briefings and for participation in policy deliberations. This is partially because the corps of National Intelligence Officers (NIO) has been allowed to run down in number and partially because I have not been in close enough touch with the NIOs to satisfy the degree of my interest and participation in intelligence estimates and policy processes.

To correct this, I am restructuring the role of the NIOs and the procedures for having the National Foreign Intelligence Board (NFIB) and its constituent members make their inputs into national estimates prepared by the CIA.

National Intelligence Officers will report directly and function as staff to the DCI and DDCI. They will constitute the National Intelligence Council (NIC). The chairman of the NIC (C/NIC) will function as chief of staff in directing and coordinating the work of the NIOs.

Although the Director NFAC (D/NFAC) and the C/NIC will report independently and directly to me, I will expect there to be the closest possible collaboration between them in causing NFAC's intelligence production to become the basis for national estimates and in meeting the other intelligence needs of the NSC, its members and the DCI and DDCI.

The NIOs will continue to be the DCI's principal representatives in policy forums, and will continue to support the DCI in his role as member of the NSC and the DDCI as Intelligence Community representative to the SIGs--working through D/NFAC and NFAC for assistance.

The DCI, DDCI, D/NFAC and C/NIC will meet weekly to review the status of national estimates and other major intelligence products, to determine what new estimates are required and to assign the drafting of the estimate. These drafting assignments will normally go to NFAC, but, when appropriate talent or special expertise is available or for other special reasons, drafting may be assigned to NIC or to other members of the Intelligence Community.

CONFIDENTIAL

The Agency assigned drafting responsibility will prepare terms of reference which will be circulated by the appropriate NIO to constituent members of the NFIB for comment. All NFIB agency heads should review this outline and respond within 48 hours.

A draft estimate, with the comments of the appropriate NIO, and of NFAC if the draft is prepared elsewhere, shall go to the DCI/DDCI for approval. The appropriate NIO will maintain liaison between the drafting unit and other members of the Intelligence Community in order to reflect their views on the estimate and minimize delay in reflecting the views of other members of the Intelligence Community in the estimate. The NIC may meet or obtain the alternative views of scholars or others outside the Intelligence Community when it appears that this will improve the range or the quality of the estimate.

All estimates except for the large military estimates such as 11-3/8 and 11-4, are to be coordinated by representatives of the Community within three working days after approval of the draft by the DCI. These representatives should be the senior line managers of each agency's component having primary substantive interest in the subject of the estimate. Either by telephone or in a meeting, agencies will present corrections of fact or alternative text where there is a disagreement with the draft. Alternative text will be approved by the agency head. The NIO will be responsible for revising the draft to accommodate corrections and for the inclusion of alternative text in the body of the draft. The holders of alternative views will be identified by agency.

The DCI will authorize circulation of the revised draft to NFIB principals for consideration at the next meeting of the NFIB. All changes agreed at the NFIB will be completed within 48 hours following the meeting and the final estimate provided to the DCI for his approval not later than three days after the NFIB meeting. Agency views or text will not be included in an NIE if received more than 48 hours after an NFIB meeting.

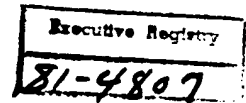
The NIC will have a small support group to help prepare materials for interdepartmental meetings and papers, including NSCs and SIGs, as well as to assist NIOs in their drafting responsibilities. It is my intention that the NIC should be staffed by people of extremely high calibre from within the government and from the outside.

I believe that it is important to expose a small number of our very best analysts to the creative talents of the senior officers chosen as NIOs. The broad perspective, fresh thinking, judgment and wisdom of these officials is a valuable training and educational experience for some of our best young people. Through the NIOs, the analysts also can significantly enlarge their familiarity with a wide range of outside specialists and people with broad foreign policy experience--an invaluable asset and a useful investment for the future. NFAC and other intelligence organizations from which analysts attached to the NIC are drawn can only benefit from the service in a rotational arrangement. This should help enormously in building a small cadre of analysts in the Community, and especially in NFAC, who have the capability to approach major issues with a geostrategic perspective and drafting skills honed by service in a small but intellectually highly charged and very demanding environment.

CONFIDENTIAL

The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D. C. 20505



NFAC 4652-81

69

30 July 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: National Foreign Intelligence Board Principals
FROM: Director of Central Intelligence
SUBJECT: Interagency Intelligence Production

The attached procedures for interagency production, which we discussed at NFIB on 21 July, are approved and are effective immediately. When feasible, estimates in progress will be adjusted to conform. I ask your cooperation in making the new system work.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William J. Casey".

William J. Casey

Attachment:
Procedures For Production
Of Interagency Intelligence
Assessments, dated 27 July 1981

DERIVATIVE CL BY SIGNER
REVIEW ON JULY 87
Derived from Multiple

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

27 July 1981

PROCEDURES FOR PRODUCTION OF
INTERAGENCY INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS

This Notice establishes new guidelines for production of interagency intelligence assessments, based on the experience to date of the National Intelligence Council (NIC), and on recent critiques of existing procedures.

Policy

National Intelligence Estimates (NIEs and SNIEs) are the most important product of the Intelligence Community and should be given the highest priority by all intelligence agencies. They will again become the primary Intelligence Community contribution to the policy formulation process at the national level. (Interagency Intelligence Memoranda will continue to be produced as before, on occasions when the paramount intelligence task is the reaching of factual determinations. See Page 5.)

The principal purpose of these changes

- To produce NIEs and SNIEs which are better suited than are existing estimates for NSC and Cabinet-level examination and consideration, while preserving their usefulness for other important consumers
- To assist senior policymakers by producing interagency assessments which are less bulky -- and to do so quicker.
- To improve the substantive usefulness of such assessments to the policy process.
- To enhance senior review within the Intelligence Community by engaging the DCI and the other NFIB principals more fully in arriving at the judgments set out in these assessments.

Categories of Estimates

Special National Intelligence Estimates will be oriented to a current event or policy issue. The need for such estimates will normally arise from the policy formulation process. To be useful, they must be brief and timely. Papers directed at relatively narrow questions and on particularly short deadlines will normally be produced as "Category A" SNIEs. This category includes "Contingency" estimates, e.g., "What would be the reaction if the US did X?" There will also be broader "Category B" SNIEs, particularly in the political and economic fields, that require expeditious handling. Production of SNIEs will be governed by the "fast track" procedures discussed below (page 2).

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

National Intelligence Estimates will also fall in two Categories. "Category I" NIEs will be those devoted to less pressing policy concerns, e.g., Yugoslavia After Tito. Papers in this category will take somewhat longer to prepare than those tied to more immediate issues, and may include extensive back-up analysis. Production will be governed by more deliberate procedures (see page 3). The number of Category I NIEs should decrease in coming months as the number of SNIEs increases. The major periodic estimates, including the Soviet military series, will be listed as Category II NIEs. They will be produced on a schedule approved by the DCI after consultation with NFIB (see page 4).

Content of NIEs and SNIEs

In preparing estimates, Principals, Chairmen, and drafters shall assure that drafts:

- Are as directly relevant to ongoing policy concerns as possible, within the ground rules of appropriate discussion by intelligence officers. They should be written in awareness of the US role in the given situations, analyze the degree to which these situations may be susceptible to the influence of the US or its friends, and address the significance of various outcomes for US interests.
- Contain as much estimative thrust as possible, including where appropriate possible alternative future developments.
- Integrate political, military, economic and other factors--especially with respect to economic forces and to the broader political purposes of military power.
- Avoid secondary issues and unnecessary detail.
- Contain, as has been the practice, any alternative or dissenting views.
- Indicate the validity of the intelligence supporting the estimate.

Fast-Track Procedures for SNIEs

Initiation: Preparation of SNIEs may be proposed to the DCI by any senior officer, although the concerned NIO is expected to anticipate the need for such estimates through his participation in the policy formulation process. If the DCI approves a proposal, the Chairman NIC will immediately notify NFIB Principals by telephone or LDX, designating an NIO as Chairman of the estimate and requesting that each Principal name a single qualified officer fully empowered to represent him in the coordination process. Representatives should have access to and be able to speak for their Principal.

CONFIDENTIAL

Terms of Reference (TORs)/Concept Papers: The Estimate Chairman will immediately prepare draft TORS and a concept paper, check them out with the requester and the DCI, and coordinate them with the representatives by telephone and LDX. For Category A SNIEs, these steps should take no more than 24 hours, for Category B, no more than 3 days.

Drafting Responsibilities: The Chairman will in the course of establishing TORs negotiate with the representatives to identify drafters and contributors who are both qualified and available. It will be the responsibility of the Principals to free assigned drafters and contributors from conflicting duties until the draft is completed. For Category A this should regularly require no more than 2 days, for Category B, 5 days.

Format: The SNIE will regularly run no more than 5 pages for Category A and 10 for Category B. Where essential, annexes may be appended.

Coordination: When the Chairman has a satisfactory draft, he will distribute it to the representatives for coordination, normally by LDX. Representatives should immediately seek the views of their Principals. For Category A SNIEs, the Chairman will, when time permits, convene a representatives meeting to coordinate the paper, but in extreme cases will coordinate by telephone. In any case the time required should not be more than 2 days. For Category B, representatives will normally meet, and coordination should be complete in no more than 5 days.

NFIB Consideration: SNIEs will normally be reviewed by the DCI at this stage. Concurrence of the Principals in Category A SNIEs will then be obtained by telephone or through a special NFIB meeting within the next 24 hours. Category B SNIEs usually will be considered at a regular NFIB meeting if conveniently scheduled, or at a special meeting; no more than 3 days should be required.

Category I NIE Procedures

Initiation: NIEs in Category I will normally be proposed by the NIC and scheduled well in advance, although any NFIB Principal or senior policy officer may request one. The schedule will be considered by NFIB quarterly and approved by the DCI. Should an addition to or deletion from the schedule be proposed, Principals will be given an opportunity to comment prior to a decision by the DCI. Before work begins on a paper, the Chairman, NIC is responsible for designating an NIO as Chairman and notifying the Principals. Each Principal in turn will designate a single qualified officer fully empowered to represent him in preparation of the estimate.

Terms of Reference/Concept Paper: The Estimate Chairman will prepare draft TORs and a concept paper. He will assure that before they are sent out to the agency representatives, these papers have been checked out with the policy officers concerned and have been submitted to the DCI for his review. Once these papers go out to the representatives, the latter will be expected to review them with their Principals before the representatives come to the coordination meetings. The usual time to be given for such review, prior to the meetings of the representatives, will be one week. In cases where

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

circumstances warrant significant changes in the initial purpose, scope, concept, or TORs of a given paper, the Chairman will ensure that these changes have the approval of the DCI and the NFIB Principals.

Drafting Responsibilities: The Chairman will, in the course of preparing and coordinating TORs, negotiate with the representatives to identify drafting officers and arrange for contributions from individual agencies. It will be the responsibility of each Principal to ensure that contributions assigned to his agency are delivered on schedule. Drafts should regularly be completed within one month.

Format: Each draft Category I NIE will normally consist of the basic estimate and a shorter Key Judgments section. Both will be coordinated by the Agency representatives. When published, the first volume of the NIE will contain only the Key Judgments. Volume I should be no more than 10 printed pages in length. The basic estimate will be published as back-up analysis in an accompanying Volume II. There will, of course, be occasions where the length or complexity of the estimate will necessitate variations on this concept.

Coordination: When the Chairman has a satisfactory draft, he will distribute it to the representatives. The latter will be given 2 weeks to consult with their respective Principals on the content of a draft before the representatives meet for coordination with the paper's Chairman. The representatives will meet on consecutive working days for as long as necessary to complete coordination. Discussion at these meetings will center on ironing out questions of fact, examining the principal assessments of the given paper, and identifying main areas of agreement or disagreement/dissent. If major revisions are necessary, there can be a clean-up meeting to review the final text; new issues will not be raised at clean-up meetings. Any major issues not resolved at representatives' meetings will be examined at NFIB by the DCI and the Principals.

NFIB Consideration: Volume I as coordinated by the representatives (that is, Key Judgments, together with any dissents or unresolved issues) will go to the DCI for approval and distribution to the Principals, who will be given at least 7 working days to review the final draft. It will be scheduled for the next regular meeting of NFIB thereafter. At NFIB, discussion will center on the estimate's major questions, with any necessary editorial or minor fixes to be done subsequently under the direction of Chairman, NIC and the paper's Chairman, as directed at NFIB by the DCI. The Chairman will also be responsible for conforming a coordinated Volume II to Volume I. Volume II will be published within one month after Volume I.

Category II (periodic) NIE Procedures

The procedures outlined above for Category I NIEs in general apply also to Category II. These papers are likely to be longer (sometimes more than two volumes) and more complex than those in Category I, and arrangements for

CONFIDENTIAL

their production may involve an elaborate structure of working groups and subgroups, DCI Committees, etc. They will also take more time to prepare. Nonetheless, every effort will be made to move them along expeditiously, and to keep Volume I concise and policy-oriented. Present production of periodic NIEs should not be significantly changed under these procedures.

Interagency Intelligence Memoranda (IIM)

The IIM will be prepared in accordance with SNIE or NIE procedures as appropriate to the issue addressed, except that it will be coordinated in the Community at the NFIB representatives level and issued by the Chairman, NIC. Representatives may, of course, seek the approval of their Principals. An IIM may be referred to NFIB and issued by the DCI if he so decides, or if requested by a NFIB Principal.

General

These procedures should provide a maximum of one week for the production of Category A SNIE's, three weeks for Category B SNIE's, and three to four months for the production of Volume I of Category I and most Category II NIE's. Principals will, of course, retain their right of dissent in all cases and categories of estimates, including IIM's.

After NFIB discussion of an SNIE or NIE, the estimate Chairman will convene the representatives for a review of and follow-up to the NFIB proceedings. This meeting should also focus on identifying gaps in collection or analysis for future emphasis. The Chairman will be responsible for initiating further action through appropriate channels to fill such gaps.

These procedures may be abridged by C/NIC when an estimate is needed more quickly than they will permit. The only essential conditions are that each agency have an opportunity to dissent, and that the DCI approve the final product.